

# **Punjab Economic Forum to change people's lot: governor**

LAHORE

The two-day Punjab Economic Forum-2017, which brought together international and national experts to discuss economic equity, concluded here on Tuesday with an aim to improve commoners' lives in Punjab.

Punjab Governor Muhammad Rafique Rajwana, while speaking at the closing ceremony, said it was heartening to see a good number of economists under one roof discussing the economic growth in Punjab while finding out new ways to accelerate the pace of progress benefitting the commoners in the province.

“We must learn from the extensive experience of the experts present here so that the true objective of organising this forum can be achieved. I congratulate Planning and Development Department and the Urban Unit on successful execution of the programme,” he added.

The closing ceremony was also attended by Punjab Finance Minister Dr Ayesha Ghous Pasha. Dr Waqar Masood, ex-federal secretary for finance commended the successful organisation of Punjab Economic Forum and stressed on the need of political ownership of economic equity projects so that the economic progress of the province is diverted to right path.

The two-day event brought together a number of international and national experts discussing six various themes in six sessions respectively. Inclusive economic growth, natural endowments, human and skills development, financing public goods and public private partnership, industrial and urban development and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor were discussed as key themes in the forum. International speakers included Ms Abla Amawi (UNDP), Dr Anthony Chiu (Philippine), Dr Athula Senaratne (Sri Lanka), Muhammad Abdul Khalid (Kuala Lumpur), Hassan Mohtashami (UNFPA), Dr Nauman Majid (ILO, Switzerland), Illango Phatachamutu (Country Director World Bank), Michele Clara (UNIDO, Austria), Prof Li Xiguang (Beijing), Ms Janet Salem (UNEP), Dr Fahad Khan (Asian Development Bank), Dr Martin Lau (LUMS), Robert N Webb and Dr Murtaza Haider (Ryerson University, Canada) besides national panellists of extraordinary profiles. Dr Ishrat Hussain, ex-governor State Bank and Dr Hafiz Pasha also addressed the audiences.

“Punjab Economic Forum has been able to provide a unique platform for promoting discourse on growth and development priorities of the province and derive public policy options”, said Muhammad Jehanzeb Khan, Chairman Planning and Development Board Punjab while addressing the closing ceremony.

Iftikhar Ali Sahoo, Secretary Planning and Development Department, Punjab said, “the underlying objective has been to include and involve maximum number of experts so as to come up with a comprehensive and sustainable plan to turn Punjab economy into a thriving one that will offer something for everyone living here. Progressive lives of the people in Punjab is one aim we are looking to achieve through discussions and sessions held in last two days.”

The forum was attended by professionals, practitioners, academicians, development partners, researchers and the government officials. The deliberations will help in improving existing economic fabric of Punjab and chalking out a future course of action. The panellists stressed the need to ensure the fruits of economic stability and equity reach the common man in the province.

Free medical camps at PU: Free checkup and awareness camps for diabetes and hypertension were set up at Punjab University on Wednesday.

PU Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Zaffar Mueen Nasir inaugurated the camps set up by the university Health Centre led by Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Tahseen Zameer.

Talking to students, Dr Zaffar said such positive activities must be organised and more and more awareness be created about such diseases. He said since smart phones and technology had reduced our physical activities, we must go for screening after six months.

CMO Dr Tahseen Zameer said around 422 million people in the world were suffering from diabetes, causing some 1.5 million deaths. She said two informative and early diagnostic camps had been set up regarding diabetes mellitus and hypertension for the university population, one at undergraduate block and the other at Institute of Business Administration.